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V CORPS, U.S. ARMY EUROPE HOST PAIR OF RUSSIAN GENERALS IN SPIRIT OF PARTNERSHIP

U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army Training Command release

GRAFENWOEHR TRAINING AREA, Germany -- Soldiers from V Corps' 1st

Armored Division took part in giant step in the post Cold-War era here late last week, when the commander-in-chief of Russian ground forces visited the training facilities and NCO academy of the 7th Army Training Center.

General-Colonel (Lt. Gen.) Aleksey F. Maslov, commander-in-chief, and General-Lieutenant (Maj. Gen.) Yevgeney N. Marusin, chief of intelligence, Russian Ground Forces, made the trip at the invitation of Gen. B.B. Bell, commander, U.S. Army Europe.

They used the opportunity to learn more about the training tactics of a NATO ally and to get a glimpse of the newly constructed NCO academy, where several Russian soldiers will be attending the Primary Leadership Development Course in May in an effort to develop a stronger volunteer force within the Russian military.



JASON L. AUSTIN

General-Colonel Aleksey F. Maslov, commander, Russian Ground Forces, awaits take-off from the Grafenwoehr (Germany) Army Airfield prior to flying to Heidelberg during a partnership visit with U.S. Army Europe officials. Maslov and General-Lieutenant (Maj. Gen.) Yevgeney N. Marusin visited at the invitation of USAREUR commander Gen. B.B. Bell.

"Currently in Russia, we are starting to introduce a volunteer contract army as well,"

Maslov said through an interpreter. "So one of the objectives of this visit is to learn more about that and to see how (the U.S. Army) operates. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, I received the invitation from Gen. Bell and certainly I couldn't fail in responding to that."

"This was an opportunity to continue improving relations between Russia and America and to share training ideas and techniques for Soldiers to development ways to improve each other's army," said Brig. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, commander, 7th ATC. "They were specifically interested in NCO development and training instrumentation, as they are looking for ways to train their army to meet evolving mission demands."

The visit was Maslov's first time out of Russia.

"He was very engaging -- a strategic visionary," Hertling said of the Russian commander.

"He knows how he wants to transform the Russian army to meet their security demands."

Hertling said the commander conveyed to him that he was impressed with our system and training process, but most impressed with the quality of Soldier.

The visit also enabled Hertling and Maslov to discuss Torgau '05, an exercise slated to take place here in May, in which a Russian headquarters element and U.S. headquarters element will conduct a training exercise.

The two Russian generals visited several locations here during their visit. The first was the Close Combat Tactical Trainers, where they used several tank simulators, followed by a gunnery range hosted by 1st Armored Division, where the Russians watched two M1A1, Abrams tanks and two M2A3 Bradley Fighting Vehicles perform gunnery maneuvers before Maslov, a tanker, entered both tanks and fired several rounds downrange from each.



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A sabot round travels downrange at the Grafenwoehr (Germany) Training Area March 24. The gunner in the M1A1 Abrams tank belonging to V Corps' 1st Armored Division is General-Colonel Aleksey F. Maslov, commander, Russian Ground Forces. The general, a tanker, was visiting the training area at the invitation of U.S. Army Europe commander Gen. B.B. Bell.

"It was a great pleasure to look at this range and the M1A1 tank," Maslov said. "We enjoyed visiting the simulation center, the training center and here, the range, as well, because everything is in good order, everything is very well prepared. And I had a chance to recapture my youth."

After dinner and a night's rest, the generals visited the Expeditionary Battle Command Training Center, where they learned how the U.S. Army uses computer simulations to train units on a strategic level.

They then traveled to the NCO academy before heading to Rose Barracks in Vilseck,

Germany, where they viewed demonstrations of medical training and the Deployable Instrumentations System - Europe at the Combined Arms Training Center, as well as living quarters for single and married Soldiers.

In the final leg of their trip, they flew to Heidelberg, where they visited USAREUR headquarters and received a briefing on the command before dining with Bell in his home, where the USAREUR commander toasted the Russian Army, Maslov's leadership and vision, and the future partnership between the U.S. and Russian armies.

